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113, 197, 564, 582, 614

[For information pertaining to language regions, kinship terminology and kin relationships, see 5: Karve AW1 India, category 116, pp. 230-1.]

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463 564 referred to as 'the Kapu' or agricultural castes. As this name suggests, they derive the major part of their subsistence by tilling the land, although individuals from any of these groups may engage in trade and commerce or may take up urban occupations.

In the second group we can place the following: the Brahmin (priests), the Komti (traders), the Kummari (potters) and the Golla (shepherds). The five sections of the Panch Bramha group of artisan castes, that is, the Wadla (carpenters), the Kammari (blacksmiths), the Ausula (goldsmiths), the Kase (workers in bell-metal) and the Kanchari (sculptors), also belong to this group —although they claim separate identity and are rather exclusive. The Sale (weavers), the Gaondha (toddy-tappers), the Sakali (washermen) and the Mangali (barbers) also follow their traditional occupations; and although in the hierarchy of caste organization their place is a little inferior to the castes mentioned above, they belong to the second group for the purpose of our classification. The position of the once-tribal but now largely assimilated Vaddar (stone-breakers) and the Erkala (hunters and basket-makers) is slightly different, for although they are not untouchables their position among the clean castes is the lowest.

564 There are only two untouchable or depressed castes in Shamirpet, the Mala and the Madiga. Of these two, the Malas consider themselves superior to the Madigas, by whose touch they are [641] polluted. However, it should be pointed out that the Indian constitution has abolished untouchability. The untouchable castes can draw water from the public wells and can without discrimination share the public utilities with the clean castes. Their children now freely attend the common village school. But social conservatism dies hard and legislation alone cannot overnight change the deep-rooted complexes of thought and behaviour which are the heritage of many generations of a caste-ridden social system. 582 Caste still retains its endogamous character, and traditional rules prohibit inter-dining with persons of lower castes. Thus in these two spheres at least the untouchable castes have still to confine themselves to their narrow circles. While in the cities the clean castes are no longer sensitive to the touch of a person belonging to these castes, in the countryside an untouchable still cannot approach too close to clean-caste people lest they be polluted by a chance physical contact. Some progressive-minded untouchables

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UNTOUCHABLE CASTES

Mala
(An untouchable caste)

Madiga
(An untouchable caste)

The above table does not include the Panch Bramha group. In point of religion they are Hindus, but their position in the caste hierarchy is rather uncertain. This group comprises five divisions: The Wadla (carpenter), the Kammari (blacksmith), the Ausula (goldsmith), the Kase (carver of figures in wood and stone) and the Kanchari (worker in bell-metal). Of these only the first three sections are found in Shamirpet. Inter-dining and inter-marrying, these sections constitute a distinct group of their own. In the local caste hierarchy they should be placed below the Kapu-Kummari-Golla group, but it cannot be said that they rank equal to or below the Sale-Gaondla group.

Among Hindus the Brahmin holds the highest place. He officiates at the ceremonies of all castes, except those of the Vaddar, the Erkala, the Pichha-Kuntla, the Mala and the Madiga. However, he is consulted by these castes also regarding the auspicious timing of agricultural operations or to perform marriage ceremonies; and his astrological calculations are eagerly sought by all people. All castes, except the Panch Bramha group, will accept food at his hands, but being 'pure and high-born' he cannot accept food from the hands of any but his caste fellows.

564 793 [787] [264]

The Komtis rank next to the Brahmins. They are mostly traders and money-lenders, keeping small shops where they sell grain and general provisions. All castes except the Brahmin and the Panch Bramha group accept food at their hands, but they do not take food from those castes whose social position is lower than their own, and thus can only accept food at the hands of the Brahmins.

564 264 582

The Reddi sections of the Kapu (agricultural) group, the Kummari and the Golla castes are of equal caste status. Although each is an endogamous caste, they will freely inter-dine with each other, and social contact between them is on a basis of equality. The position of the other Kapu section, viz. Muttarasi, is a little lower. The first Kapu section as well as the Golla will eat at their hands, but the Kummari will refuse food which they have touched.

On the next level are the Sale and the Gaondla, who enjoy a

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564 264 582 more or less similar position but are both endogamous and do not inter-dine. They accept food at the hands of the castes higher than themselves but not from those which are lower. Similarly, the Sakali and the Mangali have a similar caste status, but they do not inter-marry or inter-dine. But again, both the Sakali and the Mangali will dine with the Sale and the Gaondla and all the other castes higher than themselves. The Vaddar and the Pichha-Kuntla will eat with neither the Sakali and the Mangali nor with the untouchable Malas and Madigas, but they can take food at the hands of all castes higher than themselves. The Erkalas will eat from the hands of all castes except those of the Mala and the Madiga. The Sakali and the Mangali do not accept food from the Erkala. The Erkala and the Pichha-Kuntla will accept food from the Vaddar, but the Vaddar will not accept food from the Erkala and the Pichha-Kuntla. Finally, the Mala and the Madiga will eat at the hands of all the higher castes, but the Mala, considering himself superior of the two untouchable castes, will refuse food touched by a Madiga.

The position of the Panch Bramha group is peculiar. They constitute a consolidated and self-sufficient group. They do not accept food at the hands of any other castes, nor do any other castes accept food touched by them. Here the position differs vitally from that found in north India, where the carpenter, the blacksmith, the worker in bell-metal, the goldsmith and the carver of images constitute different endogamous castes which do not, as they do in this area, inter-marry and inter-dine. Their social status is neither very high nor very low. Everywhere they rank lower than the 'twice-born' *varnas* of Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas, but they are not regarded as impure and their status is infinitely superior to that of the untouchables. In the area under study while the Panch Bramha group is regarded as 'clean', even the untouchable Mala would refuse food touched by them, and it is only in recent years that the Madigas have started to eat from their hands. 'Their very touch poisons the food. How can we accept it?' the people are often heard to remark when they are asked to explain their refusal of food touched by any of the Panch [881] Bramha castes. The Panch Bramha castes wear the sacred thread 564 of the twice born and refuse food even from the Brahmin. It is probable that their social exclusiveness reflects an attitude which was developed in ancient times when a great fusion of Aryan and

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non-Aryan groups was taking place in Indian society and Hinduism was consolidating itself. The highly organized craftsmen's guilds of those days may perhaps have succeeded in maintaining their integrity and exclusiveness for a long time, but had ultimately to yield; yet the tension created by their resistance remained, and even when they were absorbed into the fold of Hindu society they were not admitted as equals to the groups of comparable social status and in consequence probably continued to maintain their age-long exclusiveness.

All the castes whose relative positions in the caste-hierarchy have been shown in the accompanying table are endogamous. There is a permanent social distance between them; the individual is born into a caste, and a subsequent change in status is, except to the very lowest strata of society, equally impossible upwards or downwards.[1] In general it may be said that people accept food at the hands of all castes occupying a higher level in this hierarchy, the only exception being that of the Vaddar, who do not accept food from the highly placed Sakali and Margali. Without exception people on a higher level refuse food from those on a lower level. Each caste has a traditional occupation sanctioned by religion, and these monopolies should not be intringed upon, except in the case of agriculture, which all may pursue.

Mention should here be made of the Jangam and the Katike castes, of each of which there is one family in Shamirpet. The Jangam are a semi-priestly caste ritually attached to the Baljas, for whom they tie the 'lingam'—a phallic symbol representing Shiva—and function as priests on the occasion of weddings. On the days of *Pitra Moksha Amavasya*[2] and *Shivaratri*,[3] they visit Hindu houses, particularly of those peasants who follow the Shaivite[4]

[1] When a person is excommunicated or out-casted he is not down-graded and pushed into a lower caste; he is merely denied the privileges of equal participation in the socio-religious life of the community.

[2] The night of the New Moon in the Hindu month of Bhadrapada (August–September).

[3] The day on which Shiva is believed to have drunk the world's poison, retaining it in his throat, and thereby saving mankind from possible harm from this poison.

[4] Of the great gods of the Hindu 'trinity' Brahma is not worshipped because of his sinful infatuation for his own daughter, whilst Vishnu and Shiva are worshipped. Those who principally worship the former, usually in his incarnations as Rama and Krishna, are known as Vaishnava; those worshipping the latter as Shaiva or Shaivite. Cf. Dowson, *A Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology* (London, 1950), pp. 56–59, 296–300, 360–362.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

564 communities. Persons belonging to several different castes are [621] united by some common values and obligations in this unit. But caste as a unit of social organization cuts across the narrow boundaries of the village and extends to a fairly wide geographical region. The *varna* system or the fivefold division of Hindu society is an all-India phenomenon, but in the different geographical and linguistic regions these *varnas* are divided into numerous castes (*jati*) which are practically distinct from and independent of comparable castes in other areas. Thus in South India, in the Tamil, Malayalam and Telugu-speaking regions respectively, there are separate groups of Brahmins who constitute independent castes. There are numerous restrictions on inter-dining, and intermarriage between them is not permitted. All these groups will be designated by the generic term Brahmin; but in actual practice they are each a separate caste characterized by endogamy and [101] distinctive local traditions. It has been pointed out earlier that culturally Shamirpet lies in the area of Telangana, which is a •582 part of the larger culture-area of Andhra-desa. Most of the castes in the village confine their social intercourse to Telangana itself, a 564 few extending it to other parts of Andhra-desa. The Muslims, being 621 converts to an alien religion, are not obliged to observe this rule and can freely inter-marry with Muslim immigrants from other parts; but among them also marriage between people already having some blood ties is preferred. For Hindu castes it may be said that in actual practice a number of neighbouring villages constitute for them a quasi-independent local group within the wider regional community. In analysing one hundred and twenty family case-histories, it was found that out of three hundred and eighty marriages over 68% were confined to a group of villages (and the cities of Hyderabad and Secundrabad) within a radius of approximately thirty-five miles from Shamirpet; 30% to other villages within sixty miles of the village; and only 2% in still more distant villages or towns. In no case was a marital union entered into with a non-Telugu caste, even with a similar caste name and social status in another linguistic or geographical [571] area. Thus the horizontal ties of caste extend to the whole culture area, but active social relationships are generally confined to a cluster of neighbouring villages.

623 Two types of inter-village organizations deserve to be noted. They are councils of the different castes and inter-village councils.

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Hindus
Muslims

RITUAL STRUCTURE

For three to ten days the household gods, as well as those at the family's favourite shrine, are worshipped. For the latter the girl is taken out with the village women in a procession, and the Madigas are summoned to play their musical instruments. With the exception of the Brahmin and the Komti, in all other castes the women from the neighbourhood assemble every afternoon for singing and dancing at the house of the girl for whom the ceremony is being performed. Among the Muslims, at the time of first menstruation the girl is secluded for seven to eleven days. At the end of this period she is given new clothes, which she wears after taking her bath.

Ear and nose boring of the girls is done before the age of puberty among both the Hindus and the Muslims. But this act has no religious rites attached to it.

Marriage. In the community people are as a rule married when they are adults; only in some cases are adolescents married. Child-marriage is rare. Out of 380 first marriages investigated by us, only 14 could be described as child-marriages.

Among the Hindus, negotiated marriages are common. People show an unmistakable preference for cross-cousin marriage when the subject is discussed with them; but out of the 340 Hindu marriages analysed by us, only 18% were cross-cousin marriages, the rest being negotiated marriages into unrelated families. Muslims permit both parallel and cross-cousin marriages, and indeed regard them as highly desirable. Our sample of Muslim marriages is not quite adequate, but out of 40 marriages fully investigated 19 were between cousins. Among the agriculturists, and to a lesser extent among others, it is necessary for the girl's parents to pay a dowry to the boy. This accounts for the relatively few marriages by service. When the parents of the boy are too poor even to arrange for the normal expenses of an average wedding—involving expenditure on the buying of clothes and ornaments for the bride and bridegroom, marriage feasts and other incidental expenses—the boy may serve with his prospective father-in-law for a stipulated period, at the end of which the latter marries him to his daughter at his own expense. Marriages by exchange may be arranged between two families to economize on the dowry; and further they may be celebrated at the same time so as to complete two weddings for the expense of one. Cases of run-away marriages occur at times, but they are

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liberty and shield us when parents are angry. We like them and willingly do odd bits of work for them. But others are different. They always have a frown on their faces. At the slightest pretext they are annoyed. We do their work too, but very grudgingly. We make faces behind their backs.' The same applies to aunts. Cousins should be regarded as brothers and sisters, and in a joint family they are certainly treated as such. It naturally follows from this that one should treat one's nephews and nieces as one's own children. While this is found to be rather difficult in actual practice, any favouritism and partiality to one's own children to the exclusion of the brother's children is a fruitful cause of dissension within the family.

RELATIONS OUTSIDE THE FAMILY

Affinal relatives do not maintain close contacts. They meet only on ceremonial and ritual occasions and in such meetings follow the mode of correct behaviour prescribed by tradition. A man will show respect and touch the feet of both his father-in-law and mother-in-law, but his relations with them would always be of a formal nature and would rarely be characterized by intimacy or emotional attachment. Similarly, between the respective parents-in-law of a husband and wife, the relations are rather formal. When they do meet on ceremonial occasions or visit one another, they try to be polite and consciously avoid controversial issues which may cause unpleasantness. If the father of a girl is compelled to intervene on behalf of his daughter who finds life rather difficult in her husband's home, he will exercise considerable tact and refer to the matter in a roundabout way. Amicable settlement is preferred, and all possible efforts are made to avoid a show-down.

Outside the family circle the relations between a person and his or her mother's brother are of special significance. As cross-cousin marriages are preferred in the community, a boy expects to get his wife from his maternal uncle's home, and a girl feels that she may have to go there as a daughter-in-law. With the younger brothers and sisters of his wife a man would have joking relations, and would frequently exercise the privilege of familiarity permitted to him by custom. Other relatives such as maternal grandfather and maternal grandmother are so distant, and contacts with them so rare, that there are no traditional norms regarding them.

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602 However, in dealing with such relatives who are outside the family circle, one must observe the prescribed etiquette. They must be invited on all ceremonial occasions, and when they arrive they must be 'received well'. At the ceremony itself they should be given a place of honour befitting their age and relationship status. The relationship entitles them to hospitality, and according to the 'resources and capacity' of the family they should be well looked after when they are staying as guests. It is customary to cook special dishes in honour of such guests, and the choicest share of what is prepared is invariably given to them. Due attention should be given to their comforts for the entire period of their stay as guests in the house.

582 605 Among Muslims, besides cross-cousin marriage, marriage between parallel cousins is permitted and indeed encouraged. As a consequence of this the pattern of inter-personal relations between the children of two brothers is somewhat different from that described for the whole community. Cousins of opposite sexes spend their childhood together with each other playing and behaving as brother and sister. At the age of eight or nine an effort is made to segregate them, but this segregation is neither strict nor complete, and they continue to meet, and if they like they can [562] find opportunities to talk with each other. But when formal negotiations for marriage are opened, it is expected that the girl will start observing *purdah* and start veiling herself. From this time onwards the cousins should not have any direct contact. If the cousins are not to be married, they can continue as before. The correct mode of behaviour for them would be to regard each other as brother and sister.

LIVING TOGETHER

point of rubbing genital organs. Girls masturbate either by pressing and releasing their clitoris with their fingers or by rubbing their thighs. Obscenity and talk about sex are disapproved by the elders, but the boys regard it as a mark of toughness and as an indication of their grown-up status, and as such indulge in it fairly regularly. Their vocabulary of abuse includes all the major sexual words, and they can often be heard abusing each other in terms such as: 'Copulate with your mother', 'Cohabit with your sister', 'My penis!'—or the rather curious 'Your mother's penis'.

Most children's games involve competition in the use of skills and stamina. The children are divided into several groups and factions, and these often come into conflict on account of intense jealousies and rivalries. Elaborate group *mores* and codes of ethics govern their inter-relations during states of friendship, neutrality and enmity. Toughness in boys is the admired quality; weakness, refined ways, spying and complaining coming in for criticism and ridicule. Running away from fright, crying and treachery to the group are remembered long after the quarrels and restoration of peace between conflicting factions. Outside the play-group the growing children have to lend a helping hand to their parents. Grown-up girls assist their mothers at their domestic tasks and take partial charge of their younger siblings, while boys do odd jobs for the father and other older male relatives. It is now time that they should take their first steps in preparing for adult life.

Adolescence brings about a significant change in the life of both boys and girls. By this age girls are expected to become proficient in all the major domestic tasks. Negotiations for their marriage are invariably started at this age. They grow up faster than the boys. While boys of a comparable age are still regarded as 'grown-up children who do not understand', girls come to be looked upon more or less as fully-grown women. Now they must be careful about their dress; particularly their breasts should never be exposed. They should 'not run about the village like boys', nor should they talk or laugh so loudly as to attract notice. Mothers advise them to be cautious in their behaviour, for this is the age when young people start giving attention to them. Young people have a special fascination for adolescent girls 'whose youth is just beginning to blossom'. Young men succeeding in fondling 'the unripe, half-developed breasts' of a girl and in having intercourse with one 'whose pubic hair is just beginning to grow' easily win the

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
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426 Money is lent at about 9½ per cent interest per annum. The registered capital is a little over a thousand rupees. There are forty-six members. There is a Secretary, a President, and a Treasurer, all honorary posts.

435 Dry land sells at from Rs. 100 to Rs. 150 per acre; wet land from Rs. 400 to Rs. 800. There has been a rise in prices owing to the increased demands for land and insufficient supply.

426 Under the Mysore Agricultural Loans Act loans nearly to the extent of Rs. 1,200 have been taken up at 4 per cent interest per annum from the Mysore Government.

796 *Festivals.*—A great festival is held at irregular intervals in honour of the goddess Gangamma, the tutelary goddess of the village and its fields and crops. There was a celebration in 1911, and another, prompted by a succession of bad seasons, in 1917. This last was celebrated from the 22nd to the 29th of April. The inhabitants of sixteen villages took part, every family making some contribution, and some 10,000 people congregated in Gownipalli. An image of the goddess is made of rice-flour, copying the silver image in Punganur. It shows only the neck and head, [782] wearing a lofty head-dress. Before this image some 2,000 victims are sacrificed. The first sacrifice is that of a male buffalo; this takes place at midnight, and is followed by that of two or three goats. In the following morning 21 buffaloes are sacrificed. Throughout the festival there is great rejoicing and weird dancing at night, with *kolattam*, short sticks held in the hands and beaten together. Finally the goddess is carried in procession, with drums and cymbals, to the water and thrown in, and there she dissolves. This year there have been good crops and all the tanks are full. [782] The animals sacrificed, in addition to male buffaloes and goats, are rams and cocks. The Brahmans take no part in this festival. The village officers make money out of it, the patel may get Rs. 30 or Rs. 40.

164 *Sanitary condition.*—Malaria is always prevalent. The water for drinking purposes is bad and the village is situated in a low marshy place. Two years ago the village suffered from cholera. There were about fifty deaths. It is free from plague. This year (1916) there was an attack of small-pox, with some deaths. In disease 759 people get themselves treated by native doctors. The nearest [743] hospital is at Srinivaspur, but no advantage is taken of it, as they regard it as most unsatisfactory.

352 All kinds of filth and dirt are allowed to accumulate in the courtyards of the houses. Cattle are housed there only and people sleep near these places. This is to a great extent minimized among the Brahmans.

• 582 No infant marriages are allowed in Mysore. The bride must be at least eight years old and the bridegroom sixteen years.

[582] All Muhammadans observe purdah.

313 Water for drinking purposes is found in abundance. All the Brahmans drink water got out of wells in their backyards. Others drink out of a well about half a furlong from the village and out of the stream aforesaid. Almost all the water is fresh. But it has a tendency to bring on malaria.

871 *Education.*—There is one school, but the accommodation is insufficient. The classes, about seven in number, are held in two

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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very close to the human inmates. Rubbish and cow-dung are stored up in front of the houses, while in rainy seasons the whole becomes a stagnant pool of water, rubbish and cow-dung. 511 356

The houses of the Pariahs are filled with an awful smell of skins, bones and putrid flesh. The insufficiency of food that they suffer from tempts them to fill their bellies with toddy and other stimulants that ultimately ruin their health.

The Sudras are perfectly temperate and simple in habits and food. The "twice-born" castes are bound to marry their girls before twelve. The lower castes are not bound to do so. But the Sudras and lower castes actually marry their girls at a very early age, both to satisfy the anxiety of elders and for fear they may not have the money afterwards. I know a case in which a girl two months old was married to a boy of two years, the boy dying a year later of cholera. They maintain strict widowhood like the Brahmans. There is no purdah. 582 ●

The villagers bathe and wash clothes and also wash their cattle in the same tank as that used for drinking. 515

Education.—There is one school; its accommodation and equipment being a rented house, an atlas, a globe, text books, some pictures of common objects, civics primers, dumb-bells, a black board, a desk, benches for boys to sit upon. 871

Elementary education is given up to the fourth standard, in the vernacular, in history, arithmetic, geography, civics, etc. This education is most unpractical and incomplete and ill-suited to the villagers, who do not proceed to college classes. It does not enable them to read good books in Telugu or to learn even the elementary principles of sanitation. They are never made to feel that they are citizens of a world, or an empire, or a province, outside the narrow bounds of their village.

Attendance—	Boys.	Girls.
1913	19	4
1914	9	3
1915	45	12
1916	54	8
1917	48	6

About 30 per cent of the adults can read the vernacular; two persons can read and talk English. There is a noted musician in the village but no other pandit. Not less than 25 or 30 per cent of those who have passed through the school have lost their capacity to write or cipher after leaving. One boy has proceeded to the Mechanical Engineering course in the Victoria Technical Institute, Bombay; another to the Arts course in the Madras University. [191]

There are 90 to 100 books, of which 70 are owned by Brahmans, made up of novels, dramas, puranas, the Mahabharata and stories. Among the Sudras, a development of literary taste, though in a very small degree, is perceptible. There are many devotional songs and lives of Telugu saints, while stories of the epics rendered into songs and recited by "Bhagavathars" are very frequent. The latest innovation is the introduction of dramas. Novels are still a rarity, as well as histories. No newspaper comes to the village. 538

The village has no temple except that of the village goddess. Her festival is celebrated with much slaughter of cattle and goats given by their owners whenever there is an outbreak of cholera or small-pox; or, failing these, once in four or five years. The cost is 796